

Appln No. 09/788,069

Amdt date August 8, 2005

Reply to Office action of May 9, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for his careful consideration of this application. In response to the above-identified Office action, Applicants amend the application and seek reconsideration, reexamination and allowance thereof. In this response, Applicants do not cancel any claims. Applicants add new claims 38-41. Applicants amend claims 1, 12, 19 and 30. Accordingly, claims 1-41 are pending.

I. Interview

Applicants' attorney conducted an interview with the Examiner on July 26, 2005. Applicants' attorney reviewed the disclosure of the present invention and attempted to clarify the subject matter that was intended to be claimed and the subject that distinguished the present invention from the references cited in the application as well as references cited in other applications owned by the assignee that have similar disclosures and subject matter. The rejections and claims of this application were not specifically discussed, however, claims from another application were discussed. The discussion of the other application was directly relevant to the present application.

While no formal agreement was reached on claim language, the Examiner and Applicants' attorney discussed language to clarify the functionality of the cryptographic modules. Specifically, the language "each of the plurality of cryptographic modules is programmable to service any of the user

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terminals" was discussed. The Examiner indicated that the use of this language would likely distinguish the claims in the set of applications under discussion, including the present application, from the prior art cited in each of the applications. This language was understood as encompassing the cryptomodules' ability to interchangeably service any user.

II. Claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-37 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,424,954 (hereinafter "Leon") in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/078893. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of these claims.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, the Examiner must establish that the cited references, combined, teach or suggest each of the elements of the claims. In regard to independent claims 1, 12, 19 and 30, these claims include the elements of "a plurality of stateless cryptomodules...a plurality of remotely located user computers, each stateless cryptomodule being programmable to service any of the plurality of remotely located user computers" or similar elements. As discussed above in regard to the Interview of July 26, 2005, Applicants do not believe that these elements of the claims are taught or suggested by Leon or Shah. Rather, Leon discloses a system where a postal security device (PSD) is connected directly to a local computer. See, Leon Abstract and Figs. 1A and 1B. Shah also fails to disclose these elements. Shah

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discloses a system where "a particular SMD may be dedicated to a single user or configured to service a group of users." See paragraph [0048]. Thus, a user must utilize an SMD (secure metering device) storing that user's account information and cannot utilize any SMD that is available. Therefore, Leon in view of Shah does not teach or suggest each of the elements of claims 1, 12, 19 and 30. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of these claims are requested.

In regard to claims 2-11, 13-18, 20-29 and 31-37, these claims depend from independent claims 1, 12, 19 and 30, respectively and incorporate the limitations thereof. Thus, at least for the reasons mentioned above in, Leon in view of Shah does not teach or suggest each of the elements of these claims. In addition, these claims include elements that in combination with the independent claims further distinguish them over the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the obviousness rejection of these claims are requested.

III. New Claims

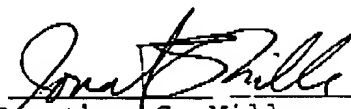
New claims 38-41 have been added. These claims depend from independent claims 1, 12, 19 and 30, and incorporate the limitations thereof. Thus, at least for the reasons mentioned in regard to the independent claims, these claims are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Therefore, Applicants believe that the new claims are in condition for allowance.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely claims 1-41 patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (626) 795-9900.

Respectfully submitted,
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